

Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement, Interior

§ 785.16

(3) The requirements of 30 CFR 824 are made a specific condition of the permit.

(4) All other requirements of the Act, this chapter, and the regulatory program are met by the proposed operations.

(5) The permit is clearly identified as being for mountaintop removal mining.

(d)(1) Any permits incorporating a variance issued under this section shall be reviewed by the regulatory authority to evaluate the progress and development of mining activities to establish that the operator is proceeding in accordance with the terms of the variance—

(i) Within the sixth month preceding the third year from the date of its issuance;

(ii) Before each permit renewal; and

(iii) Not later than the middle of each permit term.

(2) Any review required under paragraph (d)(1) of this section need not be held if the permittee has demonstrated and the regulatory authority finds, in writing, within three months before the scheduled review, that all operations under the permit are proceeding and will continue to be conducted in accordance with the terms of the permit and requirements of the Act, this chapter, and the regulatory program.

(3) The terms and conditions of a permit for mountaintop removal mining may be modified at any time by the regulatory authority, if it determines that more stringent measures are necessary to insure that the operation involved is conducted in compliance with the requirements of the Act, this chapter, and the regulatory program.

[44 FR 15370, Mar. 13, 1979, as amended at 48 FR 39904, Sept. 1, 1983; 52 FR 39183, Oct. 20, 1987]

§ 785.15 Steep slope mining.

(a) This section applies to any persons who conducts or intends to conduct steep slope surface coal mining and reclamation operations, except—

(1) Where an operator proposes to conduct surface coal mining and reclamation operations on flat or gently rolling terrain, leaving a plain or predominantly flat area, but on which an occasional steep slope is encountered as the mining operation proceeds;

(2) Where a person obtains a permit under the provisions of § 785.14; or

(3) To the extent that a person obtains a permit incorporating a variance under § 785.16.

(b) Any application for a permit for surface coal mining and reclamation operations covered by this section shall contain sufficient information to establish that the operations will be conducted in accordance with the requirements of § 816.107 or § 817.107 of this chapter.

(c) No permit shall be issued for any operations covered by this section, unless the regulatory authority finds, in writing, that in addition to meeting all other requirements of this subchapter, the operation will be conducted in accordance with the requirements of § 816.107 or § 817.107 of this chapter.

[44 FR 15370, Mar. 13, 1979, as amended at 51 FR 9006, Mar. 17, 1986]

§ 785.16 Permits incorporating variances from approximate original contour restoration requirements for steep slope mining.

(a) The regulatory authority may issue a permit for non-mountaintop removal, steep slope, surface coal mining and reclamation operations which includes a variance from the requirements to restore the disturbed areas to their approximate original contour that are contained in §§ 816.102, 816.104, 816.105, and 816.107, or §§ 817.102 and 817.107 of this chapter. The permit may contain such a variance only if the regulatory authority finds, in writing, that the applicant has demonstrated, on the basis of a complete application, that the following requirements are met:

(1) After reclamation, the lands to be affected by the variance within the permit area will be suitable for an industrial, commercial, residential, or public postmining land use (including recreational facilities).

(2) The requirements of § 816.133 or § 817.133 of this chapter will be met.

(3) The watershed of lands within the proposed permit and adjacent areas will be improved by the operations when compared with the condition of the watershed before mining or with its condition if the approximate original